CLAIM AMENDMENTS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1 – 15 (canceled).

Claim 16 (currently amended): A method for identifying seat occupancy in a vehicle, the method which comprises:

providing a plurality of seats with a plurality of reflectors;

emitting a field of high-frequency radiation towards ~~a~~ the plurality of seats with a single transmitter;

receiving ~~the~~ high-frequency radiation reflected by the plurality of reflectors in the plurality of seats with a receiver; and

evaluating, in a control unit, the radiation received by the receiver with respect to a radiation intensity and deducing therefrom a seat occupancy at the plurality of seats.

Claim 17 (previously presented): The method according to claim 16, wherein each of the seats has at least one reflector assigned thereto that is distinguishable from other reflectors.

Claim 18 (previously presented): The method according to claim 17, which comprises rendering the reflectors distinguishable by modulated reflection and/or switching the reflectors on and off at time intervals and/or changing a beam direction of the wave field.

Claim 19 (previously presented): The method according to claim 16, wherein at least one reflector is disposed in or on an associated seatbelt for each seat and when the belt is fastened, the reflector is moved into a position within a wave field emitted by the high-frequency transmit unit, in which the at least one reflector receives and correspondingly transmits back appreciably more electromagnetic high-frequency energy than when the seatbelt is in an open passive position.

Claim 20 (currently amended): The method according to ~~claim 16~~ <u>claim 19</u>, which comprises retracting the seatbelt, in the open passive position, into an electromagnetically screened region.

Claim 21 (previously presented): The method according to claim 20, which comprises retracting the seatbelt into a belt tensioner.

Claim 22 (previously presented): The method according to claim 16, which comprises implementing the method steps as an alternative to or in combination with at least one other method for determining occupancy of a

seat, in which reflectors are arranged in and/or on a seat surface, a backrest and/or a headrest of the seat.

Claim 23 (previously presented): The method according to claim 16, which comprises implementing the method steps in combination with a method for access control and/or for starting the vehicle.

Claim 24 (previously presented): The method according to claim 23, which comprises implementing the method steps at intervals and/or after activation by a pre-crash sensor.

Claim 25 (previously presented): The method according to claim 23, which comprises implementing the method steps upon activation of an accident early warning system.

Claim 26 (previously presented): The method according to claim 16, which comprises triggering a comfort application in the vehicle with at least one result or output signal of the evaluating step.

Claim 27 (previously presented): The method according to claim 16, which comprises activating user-friendly operation in a passive access control and start system in a vehicle in response to at least one specific result and/or output signal of the evaluation step.

Claim 28 (previously presented): The method according to claim 27, which comprises releasing engine start functions and/or a steering wheel lock only if a driver's seat is detected as being occupied by an adult and a customer identification device is present in an interior of the vehicle, demonstrating access and start authorization in a contactless fashion.

Claim 29 (previously presented): The method according to claim 16, which comprises processing at least one result or output signal of the evaluation step as an information source for safety applications.

Claim 30 (previously presented): The method according to claim 16, which comprises processing at least one result or output signal of the evaluation step as an information source for an activation of an airbag system, a belt tensioner, and/or an adjustment of a headrest.

Claim 31 (previously presented): A system for identifying seat occupancy in a vehicle with a plurality of seats to be monitored, comprising:

a single transmitter unit for emitting a field of high-frequency radiation towards each of the plurality of seats to be monitored;

a plurality of reflector elements respectively disposed at the seats for reflecting the high-frequency radiation in dependence on an occupancy of the seats;

a receiver unit disposed to receive the high-frequency radiation after reflection at said reflector elements; and

a control unit connected to said transmitter unit and to said receiver unit for activating a generation of the high-frequency wave field and/or for evaluating a radiation intensity received by said receiver unit in dependence on the occupancy of the seats.

Claim 32 (previously presented): The system according to claim 31, wherein said reflector elements are each assigned to a respective seat and said reflector elements are individually distinguishable from other reflectors assigned to other seats.

Claim 33 (previously presented): The system according to claim 31, wherein at least one reflector is disposed in or on a seatbelt associated with a respective seat.

Claim 34 (previously presented): The system according to claim 31, wherein said system is configured to implement the method according to claim 16.

Claim 35 (cancelled).